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ABSTRACT

The Student Support Services Program, in the student affairs division, has been a counseling and tutorial program at Chicago State University since 1978. The program's goal is to increase the retention and graduation rates of the university's students. The program's focus is to monitor extensively each participant's first year at the university with academic and counseling intervention, and to monitor and provide support services through each student's academic career. The academic and counseling interventions include: instruction in writing, mathematics, and study skills; personal counseling; academic advising; tutoring; exposure to cultural and educational activities; career awareness activities; and activities designed to increase enrollment in graduate and professional school programs. The program has consistently contributed to increasing retention and graduation rates of the university's students. (Author/MSE)

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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

ABSTRACT

The Student Support Services Program under the Division of Student Affairs, has been a counseling and tutorial program at Chicago State University for eligible program participants since its inception in 1978. The goal of the program is to increase the retention and graduation rates of Chicago State University students.

The focus of the Student Support Services Program (SSSP) is to monitor extensively each program participant's first year at Chicago State University (CSU) with a series of academic and counseling intervention activities, and to monitor and provide supportive services throughout each program participant's academic career at CSU.

The academic and counseling intervention activities include: instruction in writing, mathematics, and study skills; personal counseling; academic advisement; tutoring; exposure to cultural and educational activities; career awareness activities; and activities designed to increase enrollment in graduate and professional school programs. Through the provision of the above services the SSSP has consistently contributed to increasing the retention and graduation rates of CSU students.

INTRODUCTION

The Student Support Services Program (SSSP) at Chicago State University (CSU) is a counseling and academic support program serving students who are low-income, first-generation and/or physically handicapped. The program is funded by the U. S. Department of Education under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The counseling and academic support activities provided include: instruction in writing, mathematics, and study skills; personal counseling; academic advisement; tutoring; exposure to cultural and educational activities; career awareness activities; and activities designed to increase enrollment in graduate and professional school programs. Through the provision of the above services the SSSP has consistently contributed to increasing the retention and graduation rates of CSU students.

BACKGROUND

Chicago State University was founded in 1869 as a teacher education institution. The University was originally maintained as a Cook County institution in the State of Illinois and later controlled and supported by the City of Chicago. The University was acquired by the State of Illinois in 1965 and placed under the jurisdiction of the Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities.

The Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities governs five institutions in the state of Illinois. Students participating in the system have an overall higher average age than students enrolled at other Illinois public universities. The five schools under the Board of Governors jurisdiction are: 1) Eastern Illinois University located in Charleston, Illinois, a city approximately 150 miles south of Chicago,Illinois; 2) Governors State University located in University Park, Illinois a city approximately 25 miles south of Chicago; 3) Northeastern Illinois Universty located on the north side of Chicago; 4) Western Illinois University located in Macomb, Illinois a city approximately 150 miles southwest of Chicago; and 5) Chicago State University located on the south side of Chicago. The Board of Governors Affirmative Action Report, May 19, 1988 - Board of Higher Education Report on Minority Student Participation in Public Institutions, July 6, 1988 reports that 93% of all minority undergraduates enrolled in the Board of Governors institutions for Fall, 1987, were enrolled at Chicago State University. Data reported for Fall, 1987 by the Illinois

Board of Higher Education indicates that 30% of all Blacks attending public Universities in Illinois are enrolled at Chicago State University.

The mission of Chicago State University has been broadened over the years to include liberal arts and non-teaching pre-professional programs. As a result, Chicago State University has evolved into a multi-purpose public, urban, commuter institution where commitments exist to meet the needs of the urban community and student body.

As a non-residential commuter institution, Chicago State University draws its student body from a wide variety of high schools, community colleges and other educational institutions located primarily in the metropolitan Chicago area. The diversity of groups living in the urban setting is reflected in the student population. The University faculty and staff believe that this diversity provides a unique and valuable educational experience for its students.

The CSU student body exhibits a high need for the SSSP. This need is evidenced partially by the American College Testing Program's ACT Assessment (ACT) which is an instrument used to determine high school graduates preparedness for college level coursework. The ACT is scored on a scale of 1 to 36. The Chronicle of Higher Education (May, 1989) reports the U.S. average ACT score to be 18.8 and the Illinois average score as 18.9. The Chicago Sun-Times (January,1989), a daily newspaper, reports the Chicago average ACT score to be 13.8 based on data received from the Illinois Board of Education. A review of data supplied by the Chicago State University Office of Admissions

indicates that 76% of the total Fall, 1989 freshmen enrollees scored 17 and/or below on the ACT. If an average of 76% of the total Fall, 1989 Chicago State University student body (4505) scored 17 and/or below on the ACT approximately 3,424 would exhibit a need for academic support services.

Chicago State University is located in a residential neighborhood on the south side of Chicago, where it occupies its second campus site in 114 years of operation. The University attracts many students because of its geographic accessibility, since it is conveniently reached by public and private means of transportation. The University is served by all transportation lines to the city, such as interstate highways, rapid transit lines, railroad lines and bus routes. Together the above attributes contribute to making Chicago State University an ideal location for a Student Support Services Program.

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Student Support Services Program is to increase the retention and graduation rates of Chicago State University studentswo are low-income, first-generation and/or physically handicapped. The design of the Student Support Services Program is such that participants are assisted at their individual levels of ability to be successful at Chicago State University. The staff of the Student Support Services currently consists of a director, two (2) professional counselors, a secretary, peer tutors and peer counselors. The staff provides assistance through the accomplishment of the activities described below.

Instructional and Tutorial Component

The Math and English Learning Laboratories will be conducted by degreed full time Math and English Instructors with the assistance of four student aides proficient in the respective areas. The Student Support Services Program will provide academic supportive services which will provide both individualized and group instruction in the basic skill areas of mathematics and English. Services will be provided individually through learning laboratories. Developmental Math and English classes will also be cooperatively offered with academic departments and during a six-week summer component. The summer component will provide instruction in writing which is designed to prepare participants to be successful in English 090 or 095 (developmental English) and/or English 127 (college-level composition). Instruction in mathematics will improve the skills

of participants in order to facilitate their success in Math 090 and/or Math 095 (developmental courses).

The Program will also serve the handicapped and the student with limited English-speaking ability. The staff will identify those students who have basic skills deficiencies by using information from the Admissions Office (ACT scores, high school grade point average, and class standing), placement tests scores for English, mathematics and reading, and by further diagnostic testing in reading and mathematics. The Math and English Learning Laboratories will provide opportunities for drill and practice for individual or small-group tutoring of students who have similar needs. The Learning Laboratories will also provide diagnostic testing, tutoring and supplemental instruction for students enrolled in developmental math and English courses.

The Math Learning Laboratory will provide opportunities for critical thinking, problem solving, and creative productivity. A significant percentage of college students, for example, can carry out basic arithmetic operations but are incapable of using arithmetic to solve problems. While some students can perform simple arithmetic, they cannot, however, organize the facts of a problem in a way which will allow the use of arithmetic operations appropriately.

The diagnostic tools used for the Math Learning Laboratory are the results of examinations given by the University and/or Student Support Services Program teacher made. The forms used for prescribing and evaluating the appropriate learning modality in the Learning Laboratory is the Student Development Outline which will be discussed in detail in the Evaluation Section of

this proposal.

The English Laboratory will provide an opportunity for assistance with coherence, organization and development of the essay as a whole, coherence within and between sentences and paragraphs, sentence mechanics, word usage, and punctuation.

The diagnostic tools used for the English Learning Laboratory will consist of examinations administered by the University and/or materials constructed by the Student Support Services Program instructor. The forms used for prescribing and evaluating the appropriate learning modality in the Learning Laboratory is the Student Development Outline which will be discussed in detail in the Evaluation Section of this proposal.

In conjunction with the Learning Laboratories, Student Support Services Program students enrolled in the University's developmental courses will be assessed at midterm by respective university instructors. Student Progress Reports will be submitted to university faculty by the Student Support Services Program, completed and returned to the appropriate instructor who will then be able to ascertain students' progress in respective courses. The student progress report will be used as a tool for further assessment of tutoring needs and as a possible basis for counseling. Upon review by Instructors, the Student Progress Report will be placed in each student's file.

Counseling and Academic Advising

The Student Support Services Program is committed to providing academic advising and counseling to promote the academic retention and graduation of program participants. The target group includes entering new enrollees and continuing

students.

The counseling and advising components are considered an integral part of the supportive services network. Counseling and advising, effectively delivered, can be viewed as powerful influences on student growth and development. Effective counseling and advising is based on the assumption that the counselor can never have too much knowledge about his/her counselee. Effective counseling programs adhere to the belief that once the student becomes clear on his or her values and more in tune with self, positivism about self will become reflected in all areas of the student's life. Therefore the Student Support Services Program at Chicago State University will place a heavy reliance upon the effective operation of its' counseling component.

Personal Counseling

The central goal of the Student Support Services Program counseling staff is to aid students through individual and group counseling processes in exploring and working through such personal, educational and vocational problems that they may bring to us either by self-referral or by referral of others in the University community. It is our belief that aid to students in solving such problems, in use of various informational services, and in learning to handle future problems more effectively, can lead toward the development of more effective persons and students. The basic goal of counseling as we see it is not just the solution or alleviation of immediate difficulties. Though these are usually important, the basic goal is rather that of helping students to develop broader alternatives and better ways

of going about solving problems, thus increasing their independence, responsibility and overall functioning as individuals in an educational setting.

Academic and Personal Development

The goal of this component is to help students adjust to the university environment, achieve their educational goal, and develop effective interpersonal skills. The services of the component are directed primarily toward entering freshmen and continuing students who are experiencing academic difficulty. Each entering freshman and continuing student who is performing unsatisfactorily is contacted individually by a Program Counselor. The Program Counselor is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the student's academic progress, assisting the student in the scheduling and registration of classes, and in resolving or ameliorating personal problems or concerns. All other Program participants utilize the services of the component on an as-needed basis. Thus, each student in the program is able to utilize the services of the component throughout their matriculation at the University.

Academic Advising Procedures

During weeks 1 through 3 of each semester, the counselors will conduct initial inverviews with their counseling caseloads. Within this time frame the counselors will check to determine if appropriate class loads have been selected and correct grading options established and recorded. Additionally, they will determine whether or not tutors have been requested for developmental subjects and for other subjects in which difficulty is anticipated.

During weeks 6 through 9 of each semester, Mid-term progress conferences will be conducted. Counselors will determine whether or not outstanding incompletes have been addressed and will determine which courses their counselees have considered for the subsequent semester. Counselors will advise students to bring in course checklists and approved course lists for inclusion in their program files. The counselors will review course checklists and approved course lists, inform students of early registration dates for Program participants, and the requirements to register with the Program office. Additionally, the counselors will check to determine if registration materials have been received in the Registrar's Office.

During weeks 10 through 12 of each semester, early registration will be administered to program participants. Counselors responsibilities will include sending letters to counselees reminding them of early registration and the need to schedule appointments. Counselors will contact students to schedule end-of-the-semester conferences and ensure that students have made arrangements for extensions to satisfy all incompletes from the previous semester.

During weeks 15 through 18, end-of-semester conferences will be held. Counselors will review progress during semester and expected academic outcomes. They will calculate anticipated grade point averages and quality point needs for the subsequent semester. Counselors will supply students with counselor evaluation forms and have the students return completed counselor evaluations to the Director of the Student Support Services Program.

Study Skills Workshops

Each fall and spring term the Student Support Services Program Counselor/Tutor will develop and implement a series of Study Skills Workshops. The workshops will be designed to improve participants notetaking techniques, study skills, library usage, test-taking strategies, and methods of reducing stress. The workshops will be presented in group sessions, however, individual assistance is available through the utilization of cassette tapes and computer programs.

Buddy Program

Newly enrolled Student Support Services Program participants in attendance at the Program's Orientation will be assigned Buddies as they report to the Student Support Services Program Office. The Buddies will help make the newly enrolled participants' orientation to Chicago State University less difficult. This objective will be accomplished through individual and small group student to student assistance. A checklist of services to render will be issued to all returning students who will serve as Buddies.

Peer Counselor Program

The Professional Counselors will assign paraprofessional Peer Counselors to all newly enrolled participants during their initial counseling session. The paraprofessional Peer Counselors will be considered important members of the Student Support Services Program. The Peer Counselors will work with Student Support Services Program participants in both groups and one-to-one relationships in which they can meet in open informal contact situations; characterized by warmth, intimacy, and genuiness. In

such a setting, the Peer Counselors can make major contributions. The Student Support Services Peer Counselors, supervised by the Student Support Services Counselor/Program Specialist, will complete intensive training in the areas of time management skills, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, improving memory skills, improving concentration skills, improving scholastic motivation, improving interpersonal relations, and reading and coding textbook skills. Under the guidance of the Counselor/-Program Specialist, Peer Counselors will assist in conducting workshops each semester addressing time management skills, test-taking skills, and note-taking skills.

Exposure to Cultural Events

The entire Student Support Services Program staff will assist program participants in choosing three cultural enrichment trips for the academic year. Trips will take place in the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The number of participants will depend on those assessed as needing cultural enrichment. Live major theatrical productions, such as plays, musicals and ballets, will be reviewed upon the Counselor/Program Specialist's acquisition of schedules from theatres in the Chicago area. Subsequent to the selection of the events, a cultural activity survey will be administered to program participants in which they will indicate their cultural activity selection, in ranking order. Student Support Services Program staff will review the choices indicated by students and select the cultural activity which is most economically feasible given our budget constraints.

Activities Designed for Career Exploration

The Counselors in the Student Support Services Program will

review the academic records of all Student Support Services students. The students who have obtained 90 or more cumulative credit hours will be contacted and required to complete and return the Career Planning and Placement Registration packet which will be available in the Student Support Services Program Office. Counselors will review registration packets for completion and forward the packets to the Career Planning and Placement Office. Registration with the Office of Career Planning and Placement will allow students to schedule interviews with campus recruiters and participate in semi-annual Career Awareness Days.

In addition, the Student Support Services Program Counselors will develop and implement a Career Workshop once each full academic semester. The purpose of the workshop will be to help students plan for careers by identifying majors and participating in other related activities which will facilitate students' explorations in career choices and options. During the workshop, the Counselors will administer Holland's Self Directed Search to the students. The Holland's Self Directed Search is an instrument designed to enable students to identify values related to careers. It also allows student exploration of different occupations and the requirements of those different occupations. Program participants needing additional assistance in choosing a career will be referred to the Counseling Center to complete the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory or to the Career Planning and Placement Office to complete the computer program System of Interactive Guidance and Information (SIGI).

Graduate and Professional School Activities

The Counselors in the Student Support Services Program will develop and facilitate a Graduate and Professional School Workshop during each full academic semester. The workshop will be designed to inform students of Graduate and Professional Schools, their importance, application procedures, and the types of financial aid available for the pursuance of such endeavors.

RESULTS

Both formative and summative evaluations are conducted to provide a periodic assessment throughout the developmental phases of the Program and a final Program summary each year. A Management-by-Objectives (MBO) operational approach is adhered to throughout the duration of the grant period. The Program Director evaluates the Program by obtaining the necessary input to make decisions regarding the structure, operation and outcomes of the Program.

The Director utilizes Program data to answer the following questions:

1. Have the Program objectives been achieved?
2. Did the Program services account for the achievement of the Program objectives?

Evaluation objectives related to the assessment of the Program's execution include:

1. Documenting through Program records <u>who</u> is being served; for <u>what</u> purpose (need) they are being served; <u>how</u> they are being served; and when and how often they are being served.
2. Determining the congruence between what is planned and what actually occurs, as well as the reasons for any discrepancies.
3. Documenting the resolution of problems that may have an impact on the success of the Program to prepare Program staff for the problems and take the needed corrective action. The Program staff will through careful

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3. Documenting the resolution of problems that may have an impact on the success of the Program to prepare Program staff for the problems and take the needed corrective action. The Program staff will through careful

deliberation, collect data and evaluate program activities. The information collected will assist the Program Director with documenting Program progress and problems and the effects of such on the retention and graduation rates of program participants.

The findings indicate that the Student Support Services Program has contributed to increasing the overall Chicago State University retention and graduation rates. A comparison of Student Support Services Program and Chicago State University retention rates for freshmen is as follows:

RETENTION RATE (%)

YEAR ENTERED	SSSP FRESHMEN ENROLLED FALL 1988	CSU FRESHMEN ENROLLED FALL 1988
1985	36%	24%
1986	45%	34%
1987	79	51%

The percentages indicate that if it were not for the Student Support Services Program the Chicago State University overall retention rates would be considerably lower.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the increased retention and graduation rates, the Student Support Services Program at Chicago State University has been highly successful. It has been recommended that the program remain at Chicago State University and where possible become institutionalized in order to serve a larger number of students.

The program is funded to serve only 210 students. Additional monies would be needed to expand existing services, provide additional services, and to serve a larger population.

The need and success of Student Support Services Programs is evidenced in the current number of funded programs and the expected increase in new programs. Many colleges and universities are operating Student Support Services Programs which assist low-income, first-generation and physically handicapped students.